

Remarks

Claims 1-12 are pending. Favorable reconsideration of the above-identified application is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph as being indefinite. Applicants have amended claim 1 to overcome this U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph rejection. Accordingly, applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph rejection.

Claims 1-12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as being anticipated by Japanese Publication JP 2000-053871 to Toru et al., hereinafter the Japanese reference. The Japanese reference has a publication date of February 22, 2000. As evidenced by the attached Declaration of Ellen Lee, the present invention was conceived and reduced to practice prior to February 22, 2000.

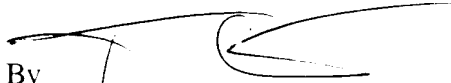
Accordingly, because the Japanese reference is not a proper rejection, withdrawal of the rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. § 112 is respectfully requested.

Applicants submit that the claims are now in a condition for allowance, and respectfully request a notice to that effect. If the Examiner believes that further discussion will advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is highly encouraged to telephone applicants attorney at the number given below.

Please charge any additional fees or credit any overpayments as a result of the filing of this paper to our Deposit Account No. 02-3978 -- a duplicate of the Petition For Extension of Time Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a) is enclosed for that purpose.

Respectfully submitted,

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